

Burford Capital Taps Big Law, Lit-Funding Vets to Fortify Investment Team

By Jon Campisi

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What You Need to Know

- Litigation financier Burford Capital has expanded its investment team with two new vice presidents and two new directors.
- The Burford additions—all in New York—come from both Big Law and financial backgrounds.

Burford Capital, the world's largest commercial litigation funder, announced four new additions to its investment team on Wednesday, as the third-party litigation funding industry continues to grow by the billions while potentially facing new legislative and regulatory hurdles.

Joining Burford in New York City as vice presidents are Vanessa Biondo, a former Mayer Brown partner who more recently comes out of the litigation boutique space, and Sam Kwak, who previously practiced at Selendy Gay, Davis Polk & Wardwell and Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler.

Joining as directors are Kanika Shah, who previously served as a director at Fortress Investment Group and also had practiced law with Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan, and Stephanie Southwick, who previously served as senior investment counselor at Law Finance Group and as an investment manager at Omni Bridgeway. Southwick had also served as managing partner of law firm Greenfield Southwick.



Burford Capital has added four new names to its U.S. commercial litigation funding practice.

Burford says the additions will help further its underwriting bench in the U.S. commercial market. The commercial team evaluates and structures capital solutions for law firms and corporate claimants and often partners with elite, Am Law ranked litigation firms and Fortune 500 companies.

“As commercial legal finance becomes increasingly institutionalized, Burford continues to invest in building a team of senior litigation and investment professionals with experience in complex, high-value disputes,” Burford stated in a news release. “These additions further strengthen Burford’s ability to underwrite and

finance meritorious commercial litigation, including antitrust, breach of contract and bankruptcy and insolvency matters, as well as other complex business disputes.”

There appears to be no shortage of cases for Burford to tackle in light of the fact that the legal finance industry is growing by leaps and bounds. The industry in 2025 was valued at just over \$25 billion, and by 2034 experts say it may reach over \$56.2 billion.

The expansion of Burford’s investment team signals that the industry is likely going to continue experiencing significant growth in the commercial funding space.

For Shah, one of Burford’s new directors, going from multistrategy giant Fortress Investment Group to Burford was appealing and reflected a desire to be a part of an industry whose growth appears to be limitless.

In an interview, Shah said she was excited at the prospect of going to work for an organization that prides itself on being willing to take on greater legal risks at exponential levels. Evan Meyerson, managing director and head of Burford’s commercial investment team, concurred.

“There are not a lot of other players in our space besides Burford that are willing to take on legal risk at that level,” said Meyerson, who previously joined Burford from Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison. Before that, he practiced with Sullivan & Cromwell.

“That was really a driving reason of why I chose to come to Burford,” Shah added. “It’s really, truly a platform that can transact in exactly the areas that Evan was speaking about.”

Meyerson said that Burford has always prided itself on having a market leading team focusing

on U.S. commercial legal finance opportunities with a mix of backgrounds that can provide a “comprehensive and thoughtful level of diligence around the deals that we do – and we are in growth mode.”

“So, this is a really exciting inflection point for Burford, which already is a market-leading business in our industry,” Meyerson said. “We are focused on putting the pieces together that complement each other to allow us to grow our business in ways in which we’ve told the market we’re aiming to do.”

Meyerson said the mix of experiences within its ranks—those who have spent time in traditional, large-scale commercial litigation, in bankruptcy, in intellectual property and in adjacent commercial disputes—helps to round out the funder’s overall reach and capabilities.

The focus for Burford’s U.S. commercial team continues to be on breach of contract and antitrust fights and other business disputes in addition to nonpatent intellectual property disputes, like trade secrets and related matters.

“We’re talking about business-on-business violence that may lead to significant damages and claims for large corporate entities,” said Meyerson, who also noted that these claims have traditionally gone unprosecuted, and that companies have seen major value left on the table.

Burford Capital, the only litigation funder publicly listed on the New York Stock Exchange, has a \$7.5 billion portfolio, according to information on its website. The funder says it committed \$872 million to finance the legal industry in 2025, with 94 Am Law 100 and Global 100 law firms seeking out its capital for client matters.